GENUINE EDITION.

MR. GRATTAN'S

ADDRESS

TO HIS

FELLOW-CITIZENS.

SECOND EDITION.

Corrected from the Original.

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WHILE the annals of Ireland exiſt, and we truſt they will be long-lived as the world itſelf—the beloved name of

HENRY GRATTAN,

THE SAVIOUR OF HIS COUNTRY,

Will appear imprinted in golden characters; and with a ſacred enthuſiaſm, the Iriſh patriot will pronounce a benediction on the man, as he reads of his glorious atchievements. Ages paſs away, and generations periſh, ere a genius emerges from the maſs of mankind to give liberty to a nation; energy of mind and reſolution of ſoul—a nice perception to diſcern the auſpicious moment, and a vigorous promptitude to ſeize it—theſe are requiſites he muſt have from Nature, and theſe, Nature, with a liberal hand, has given to Mr. Grattan Envy ever treads upon the heels of Merit—the Father of the Chriſtian Religion has had his maligners—the founder of Poetry has had his Zoilus—and the Author of Iriſh Independence his aſperſers—the emanations of a great mind give birth to ſorry defamers, as the

the dews of the morning to mushrooms: it is no wonder, therefore, that foul-mouthed Faction should attempt to gnaw Mr. Grattan's character—but it bites against a file—Like a firm oak. it will remain—and if obliged to bear the blasts of Calumny—like the firm oak, it has *stamina* to resist them all.

The following Character of Mr. Grattan, extracted from a Work of considerable merit, published in 1789, will, it is hoped, be not unacceptable to the Public, as the best preface we can give to his Letter to his Constituents, on retiring from Parliament.

The emancipators of nations, and the deliverers of their native land from political thraldom, are justly entitled to the warmest retributions of gratitude which the liberality of mankind can pay, both on account of the importance of the benefit, and the general difficulty of its atchievement. To rouse the languid, to inflame the cold, and to inspire the spiritless, is not the work of common talents or inferior souls —but of transcendent abilities, emulous of distinction by deathless deeds, and of superior genius invigorated by genuine patriotism. To perceive the happy moment for rendering their exertions effectual, and to seize on the fortunate opportunity which the revolution of time and of accidents, has produced for giving decisive efficacy to their efforts, are instances of sagacity and foresight, of opportune resolution and vigorous determination in the highest degree laudable; which may be extolled, but cannot be exaggera-

ted.

ted. So many concurrent circumſtances are requiſite to ſhake off the yoke of long-confirmed uſurpation, to infuſe a contempt of threatened menaces without infringing fraternal affection, and to elevate a people from the meanneſs of obſequious ſervility to all the dignity of independence, that to combine theſe circumſtances, to direct their operation, and to moderate their energy, are marks of ſuch merit as deſervedly claims the ampleſt and richeſt civic meed that can recompenſe the worthy citizen.

Mr. GRATTAN is certainly one of the moſt conſpicuous ornaments of the Iriſh Senate. To his manly and perſevering exertions do we owe an independent Legiſlature, and the gratitude of the nation for the boon, though teſtified with a munificence becoming its ſpirit, by no means exceeded the meaſure of his deſerts.

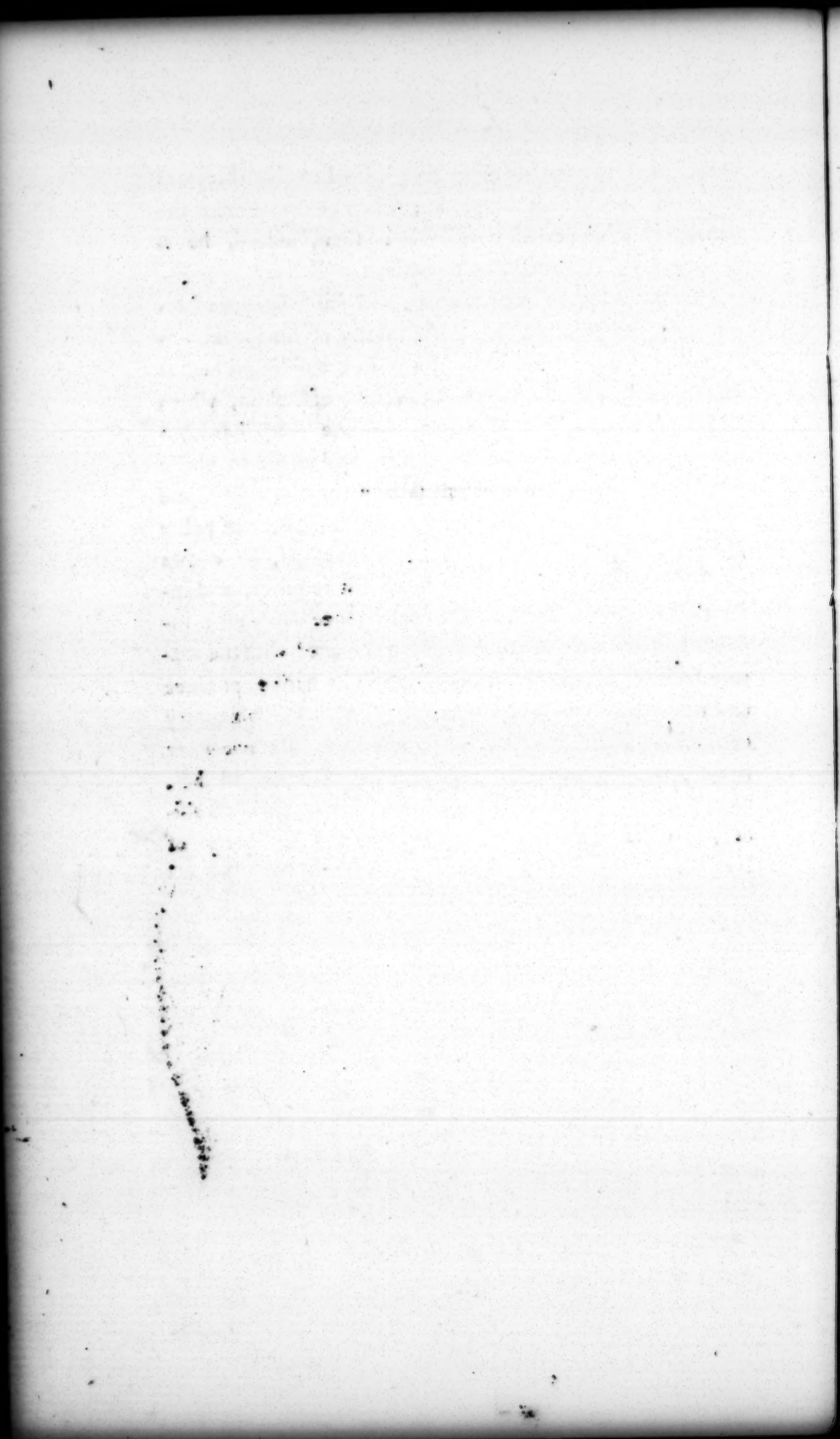
As a public ſpeaker, Mr. GRATTAN's voice is thin, ſharp, and far from powerful; not devoid of a variety of tones, but theſe neither rich nor mellow; and though not harſh, its want of an harmonious modulation is often ſtriking. Unequal to impaſſioned energy it is ſhrill when it ſhould be commanding, and in its lower notes, is ſometimes ſcarcely audible, from its hollowneſs of ſound. His management of it, is but ill adapted to remedy its natural defects or to ſupply its deficiencies, as he allows it to ſpatiate at large, unreſtrained by any curb from rule; now raiſing it to an elevation that it cannot bear, and then ſinking it to a depth where its diſtant murmurs can be barely gueſſed at. His language is lofty, magnificent, copious, and peculiarly his own. Not tricked out with the gaudy dreſs of poetic phraſes, nor fatiguing the attention with pompous terms, high-ſounding, but unmeaning, but familiarly combining ſtrength with beauty, conciſeneſs with ornament, and ſublimity with elegance. Adapted to the exigenee of the occaſion it is now a wide-ſpreading conflagration, and anon a concentered fire: now abundant and

ſplendid,

ſplendid, then brief and pointed; equally fitted to inſtruct, delight, or agitate; to ſoothe the ſoul to peace, or to awaken and arouſe all its exalted and elevated energies. His delivery admirably accords with the ſtyle of his oratory; never languid, or inſipid, or cold, but always poſſeſſing a pleaſing warmth, expreſſive of feeling and imparting ſpirit: whilſt his pronunciation, generally correct, though frequently rapid, is never crowded or redundant, but diſtinct and articulate, leaving ample ſpace for ſtrength and propriety of emphaſis. In his manner, life, animation and ardour predominate, and that to ſuch a degree that they faſcinate the prejudiced, and invigorate the torpid. From their impulſe Proſtitution forgets for a moment the voice of the Miniſter, and the influence of place, penſion and peerage have but an enfeebled hold on the half-revived carcaſe. All are conſcious of a new-born ſpark of patriotic fire, that with the rapidity of the electric ſhock, and alas! too with its ſhort-lived duration, darts from breaſt to breaſt. With comprehenſive intelligence embracing a great object, not catching at its parts by detail, he takes in the whole at one glance, and ſees inſtantly the pivot whereon it turns with almoſt intuitive acuteneſs. In argument he is ſtrong, pointed, cloſe, and concluſive; never deviating from his ſubject, never ſtraying in ſearch of extraneous matter, but explaining with ſucceſs what he underſtands with facility. He conducts not the mind to the concluſion he aims at by a long chain of abſtruſe diſquiſition, but guides it with ſeeming eaſe through the pleaſing path of natural illuſtration. Every man thinks he could reaſon like him, but when attempted it is found to be the bow of Ulyſſes. In the refutation of his opponents he puts forth all his might and accumulates his force to overwhelm and oppreſs them; but his ſuperior greatneſs is moſt apparent when he enforces what cannot be denied; when he defends the rights of a nation; when he pourtrays the hopes, the fears, the expectations

pectations of a magnanimous people; when he threatens the vicious and appals the proud; when he pronounces the panegyric of departed excellence; then, indeed, he is magnificent, ſublime, and pathetic.

His fund of knowledge is great, and his diligence of acquiſition ſtill greater; hence the matter of his ſpeeches is ever of the firſt impreſſion. Early in life diſtinguiſhed as one of the beſt ſcholars in the Univerſity of Dublin, which had the honour of his education, no time ſince has been loſt to increaſe his firſt acquirements, and to add to claſſic and ſcientific lore, a competent ſkill in the law, a profound acquaintance with the conſtitution, and a maſtery of polite literature. Thus to every ſubject of diſcuſſion, he comes perfectly prepared, familiar with what it requires, and inſtantly bringing it forth as the contingence demands; inſtructing the youthful and delighting the aged with the mature fruits of a capacious mind, rich in its native produce and richer from careful cultivation. To his Parliamentary conduct we have already alluded, and it is only neceſſary to add, that he took the moſt decided lead againſt Mr. Orde's noted commercial Propoſitions, ſupporting with ability, unuſual even in him, the trade and the liberty of Ireland.



TO

My Fellow-Citizens of Dublin.

I THANK you for paſt favours; I have found in you a kind and a gracious Maſter—you have found in me an unprofitable Servant;—under that impreſſion I beg to aſſure you, that ſo long as the preſent ſtate of Repreſentation in the Commons Houſe continues, ſo long muſt I reſpectfully decline the honour of ſoliciting at your hands a ſeat in that Aſſembly.

On this principle it was I withdrew from Parliament, together with thoſe with whom I act—and I now exerciſe my privilege, and diſcharge my duty in communicating with my Conſtituents, at the eve of a General Election, ſome ſay an immediate Diſſolution, when I am to render back a truſt, which, until Parliament ſhall be reformed, I do not aſpire to re-aſſume. The account of the moſt material parts of my conduct, together with the reaſon of my reſolution, will be the ſubject of this Letter.

When I ſpeak of my conduct, I mean that adopted in common and in concert with the

other Gentlemen. We ſhould have felt ourſelves deficient in duty if we had not made one effort, before the cloſe of the Parliament, for the reſtoration of domeſtic peace, by the only means by which it ſeemed attainable—conciliation;—and if we had not ſubmitted our opinions, however fallable, and our anxieties, however inſignificant, on a ſubject which, in its exiſtence, ſhook your ſtate, and in its conſequences, muſt ſhake the empire. Our opinion was, that the origin of the evil, the ſource of the diſcontent, and the parent of the diſturbance was to be traced to an ill-ſtar'd and deſtructive endeavour on the part of the Miniſter of the Crown to give to the Monarch a power which the Conſtitution never intended: to render the King in Parliament every thing, and the People nothing; and to work the People completely out of the Houſe of Commons, and in their place to ſeat and eſtabliſh the Chief Magiſtrate abſolute and irreſiſtible. It appeared to us that a Miniſter guilty of ſuch a crime, is as much a traitor to the Conſtitution, as the People would be to the King, if they ſhould advance in arms, and place their leader on the Throne; more guilty of treaſon in equity and juſtice—becauſe in them it would be only rebellion againſt their creature, the King—but in the other it would be rebellion againſt his creator, the People: —it occurred to us, that in this country the offence would be ſtill higher, becauſe in this country, it would be the introduction not only of a deſpotic, but of a foreign yoke, and the revival of that great

queſtion

queſtion which in 1782 agitated this country, and which, till your Parliament ſhall be reformed, muſt agitate this country for ever; we thought no Iriſhman—we were ſure no honeſt Iriſhman would ever be in heart with Government, ſo long as the Parliament of this country ſhall be influenced by the Cabinet of England, and were convinced, that the People would not be the more reconciled to a foreign yoke, becauſe re-impoſed by the help of their own countrymen; as long as they think this to be the caſe, we were convinced they will hate the Adminiſtration, and the Adminiſtration will hate them; on this principle we recollect the Parliament of this country pledged their lives and fortunes in 1782—though ſome ſeem to have thought better of it ſince, and are ready to pledge their lives and fortunes againſt this principle. We could not ſeriouſly believe that the people of Ireland were ready to reſiſt the legiſlative uſurpation of the Britiſh Parliament, in whoſe ſtation the greatneſs of the tyrant would have qualified the condition of the ſlave—and that the ſame people were now ready to proſtrate themſelves to the legiſlative uſurpation of another body—a Britiſh Cabinet—a humiliated and a tame tyrant. We recollected to have heard that the friends of Miniſtry had lamented that England had not acceded to the American claim of excluſive legiſlature—and afterward attempted to re-eſtabliſh Britiſh dominion, by influencing the American Aſſembly. We ſaw the Miniſtry purſue that very plan toward Ireland

which they regretted they had not reſorted to in the caſe of America. We need not repeat the particulars—but we ſaw the reſult to be, on the mind of the people, a deep-rooted and eſtabliſhed diſcontent and jealouſy, and we conceived that whatever conſpiracies exiſted in any extent or degree, proceeded from that original and parent conſpiracy in the Miniſter to ſubvert the Parliamentary Conſtitution, by the influence of the Crown. It appeared to us, that the diſcontent and diſturbance ſo created, was greatly encreaſed by another cauſe, the treatment of his Majeſty's Catholic ſubjects. It is the buſineſs of the Miniſter to obſerve the changes of the national ſpirit, as much as the changes of foreign combinations;—it was the misfortune of our Miniſtry that they never attended to thoſe changes; they did not perceive that the religious principle and temper, as well as the political, had undergone on the Continent, in America, and in Ireland, a fundamental alteration; that the example of America had had prodigious effect on Europe; the example and doctrine of Europe had had no effect on America; they did not ſee that in conſequence of that cauſe (there were other cauſes alſo) the Iriſh Catholic of 1792 did not bear the ſmalleſt reſemblance to the Iriſh Catholic of 1692; that the influence of Pope, Prieſt, and Pretender were at an end.—Other dangers, and other influences might have ariſen—new objects and new paſſions;—the mind of the people is never ſtationary—the mind of courts is often ſtagnant—but thoſe

new

new dangers were to be provided againſt in a manner very different from the proviſions made againſt the old. Indeed, the continuation of the old ſyſtem of ſafety approximated and ſecured the new danger—unfortunately our Miniſters did not think ſo they thought—they ſaid that the Iriſh Catholic, notwithſtanding the American revolution, notwithſtanding the French Revolution, religious as well as political, was ſtill the bigot of the laſt century—that with reſpect to him the age had ſtood ſtill—that he was not impreſſed with the new ſpirit of liberty, but ſtill moped under the old ſpirit of bigotry, and ruminated on the triumph of the croſs—the power of Catholic Hierarchy, the riches of the Catholic Clergy, and the ſplendour of the Catholic Church; you will find the ſpeeches of the Catholic opponents, particularly the Miniſterial declaimers, dream on in this manner; and you will find from the publications of thoſe ſpeeches, and of the Catholics, that the latter had laid aſide their prejudices, but that the Miniſters had not: and one of the cauſes why thoſe Miniſters alledged that Catholic mind had not advanced was, that their own mind had ſtood ſtill; the State was the bigot, and the People the philoſopher. The progreſs of the human mind in the courſe of the laſt 25 years, has been prodigious in Ireland. I remember when there ſcarcely appeared a publication in a newſpaper of any degree of merit which was not traced to ſome perſon of note, on the part of Government or the Oppoſition; but now a multitude of very powerful publications

lications appear from authors entirely unknown, of profound and ſpirited inveſtigation. There was a time when all learning in Europe was confined to the Clergy—it then advanced among the higher orders of the Laity, and now it has gone among the People: and when once the powers of intellect are poſſeſſed by the greater body of the nation, 'tis madneſs to hope to impoſe on that nation civil or religious oppreſſion, particularly in thoſe whoſe underſtandings have been ſtationary, tho' their power and riches have been progreſſive. The politics of the Caſtle, with the religious feuds of Ireland, had occupied and engroſſed their mind—the eye of that mind or the intellectual viſion had become of courſe ſubtle indeed, but extremely little—on the other hand, the politics of Europe and America had occupied the mind of the people; and therefore the mind of the people had become comprehenſive—and when the former complained of the preſs they complained of the ſuperiority of the popular underſtanding. It appeared to us that the beſt remedy was to raiſe the underſtanding of the great by enlarging the ſphere of its actions, viz. Reforming the Parliament.—But to return—The Miniſtry however thought proper to perſiſt in hoſtility to the Catholic body on a falſe ſuppoſition of its bigotry: the conſequence of ſuch an attempt was that the great body of the Catholics, I mean that part of the moſt popular and energetic, diſappointed, ſuſpected, reviled and wearied, united with that other great body of the reformers, and formed

formed a Catholic, Preſbyterian, and Proteſtant league, for the freedom of the religion, and the free and full repreſentation of the people.—Out of this league a new political religion aroſe, ſuperceding in political matter all influence of prieſt and parſon, and burying for ever theological diſcord in the love of civil and political liberty. This is at preſent in all political matters the Iriſh religion. What is the Iriſh religion? Unanimity againſt Deſpotiſm.—Viewing the ſtate of the country in this light, it appeared to us that the unconſtitutional influence of the Crown, and the proſcription of the Catholics, were the fundamental cauſes of our diſcontent and jealouſy; with theſe there exiſted other diſcontents diſtinct from theſe cauſes, without theſe cauſes inſignificant—but with theſe cauſes creating great agitation and diſturbance. Two remedies occurred—coercion and conciliation: we oppoſed the former, and we propoſed the latter.—I will trouble you with our reaſons: we conſidered the ſyſtem of coercion would in the firſt inſtance deſtroy the liberty of the people—and in the ſecond inſtance would ſubvert the authority and powers of Government. Here I beg to recur to what I have juſt obſerved on the neceſſity for thoſe who adminiſter a country to advert to the changes that take place in the temper and underſtanding of the people. Unfortunately the Miniſtry provided, for the purpoſe of making the people quiet and contented, a ſyſtem of laws and proclamations, which had they been quiet before would have rendered them diſ-

tracted.

tracted. I need not repeat them—we all know them.—We had the barren office of giving a fruitleſs oppoſition—we ſaw a ſpirit of reform had gone forth—it had conquered in America—it had conquered in France—both here and in England it exiſted, and was chiefly nouriſhed and propagated by the abuſes of our Government.——It appeared to us that the beſt way of ſtarving that ſpirit was to remove its food; far otherwiſe the propoſers of the plan of coercion;—they thought it better to feed that ſpirit and to cheriſh the abuſes and encreaſe them; they hoped to fortify their conſtitution againſt an epidemic diſtemper, by preſerving uncured the old gouts and rheumatiſms, and a hoſt of other diſorders. The power of limited monarchy was not to be preſerved by conſtitutional power, which is naturally its ally; but by deſpotic powe r which is its natural death and diſſolution. Inſtead of correcting the abuſes of the State, they invented laws which were themſelves an abuſe, and proclamations which were an abuſe alſo; and which greatly, tho' ſilently, propagated the new principle.—There are two ways by which a new principle ſpreads—one is by arms—and by martyrdom the other.—The Mahomedan religion was propagated by arms:—it pleaſed Providence that the Chriſtian religion ſhould have been propagated by the latter.—See whether the unfortunate choice of our Miniſters has not given to the new principle the benefit of both—they have fled before it abroad, and they have trampled on it at home, and giving it the double

recommendation

recommendation of conqueſt and martyrdom. This conſideration was one of my objections to perſiſt in a war with France, on account of Brabant, and it is one of my objections to perſiſt in a war with the Iriſh on account of venal boroughs. Had the Government inſtead of aggravating, reſtrained abuſes, they would have put the State at the head of a ſpirit of Reform, which they could no longer reſiſt, and could only hope to moderate—it was to ſuch a policy adopted by Queen Elizabeth that the Church of England owes principally what it retains of power and ſplendour preſerved by the Govern. ment of the country who took the lead in the Re. formation—but our's fell into a different project—they armed cap-apee againſt a ſpirit which they could not confine by arms abroad or by executions at home, and therefore inſtead of being at the head of popular meaſures, they were at the tail of them; in the Catholic queſtion, in the place bill, in the penſion bill, in every bill of a popular tendency—they reſiſted at firſt, they yielded at laſt, reluctantly and imperfectly, and then oppoſed, condemned and betrayed the principle of their own acquieſcence—they agreed to a place bill for inſtance, and then they multiplied places manifold—What is the bar bill or the bill that creates thirty new places for the Gentlemen of the law? They agreed to the firſt Catholic bill and then proſcribed the perſon of the Catholics, and oppoſe his freedom in corporations—they had before agreed to the eſtabliſhment of the independency of the Iriſh Parliament, and then

had created a multitude of officers to make that independency a name. It is reported to have been ſaid by ſome of the Miniſters of England that his Majeſty's reign has been to Ireland a courſe of conceſſion, and it was much a ſubject of wonder that the people of Ireland ſhould perſiſt in their diſſatisfaction;—the anſwer to thoſe Miniſters is obvious, the conceſſions were extorted from Miniſters by the perſeverance of Oppoſition, and they were rendered abortive by the treachery of Miniſters. The recognition of our Parliamentary Rights has been rendered abortive by unexampled exertions of bribery and corruption; the freedom of our trade by debt and war, and the elective privileges of our Catholics by a courſe of perſonal perſecution, and corporate influence—and on the whole, the benefit of conſtitutional laws, by the adminiſtration of an unconſtitutional Government. When the Miniſters talk of their conceſſions to Ireland, do they know the conceſſions of Ireland to them? Do they know the debt of the war? Continue that rate of expence, and the Engliſh wars of the next century will have the ſame effect as the Engliſh prohibition of the laſt—they will annihilate the trade of Ireland. But to return to the Adminiſtration. They relapſed into their violence when they recovered from their fears, and their ſyſtem has been therefore occaſionally violent and weak, never ſtrong and uniform. It is an obſervation of Lord Bacon that the fall of one of the Roman Emperors was due not to his tyranny nor his relaxation, but to

both

both, and that the fluctuating ſyſtem is ever fatal—'tis an obſervation of the ſame, that the way to reſiſt the progreſs of a new ſect is to correct the abuſes of the old ones. Unhappily our Miniſters differed from Bacon—their ſyſtem was faithful to no one principle, either of violence or conceſſion. We objected that it could not now reſort to unqualified violence without incurring all the objections belonging to a policy of ſubmiſſion coupled with a policy of violence, and that it could not hope to obtain the advantages appertaining to either. In purſuit of ſuch a ſyſtem the Miniſtry ſeemed to us to have loſt not only their diſcretion but their temper—they ſeemed vexed with themſelves for being angry—they ſeemed to become in a paſſion with themſelves becauſe they had loſt their temper with the people—in its ſtruggle with popular rights the State like a furious wreſtler, loſt its breath as well as its dignity—as if an angry father ſhould loſe his temper with his child, in which caſe the old fool is the moſt incorrigible: in the mean time the enemy ſeemed to underſtand our ſituation perfectly well, and relied on our expences for diſſolving our credit, and our intemperance for diſſolving our authority;—and at the very time when we were precipitating on ſuch meaſures at home, we were receiving the moſt melancholy communication from abroad;—we ſaw the Miniſter retreating from the enemy with as rapid a ſtep as he advanced upon the people, going back, and back, and back, while the Democratic principle in Europe was getting on and on,

like a miſt at the heels of the countryman, ſmall at firſt and lowly, but ſoon aſcending to the hills and overcaſting the hemiſphere—Like the Government we wiſhed to provide againſt this ſtorm; like the Government we wiſhed to diſarm the people; as the beſt means of ſafety, we wiſhed to diſarm the people; but it was by the only method by which a free people can be diſarmed—we wiſhed to diſarm the people of their grievances, and then their other arms, their leſs dangerous arms, the bayonet, and even the pike, would be retained for no other uſe but the uſe of the Government. A naked man oppreſſed by the State is an armed poſt. A few decent Biſhops, ſent to the Tower, againſt law, produced the Revolution. Mr. Hamden and the four other innocent perſons arraigned by Charles I. for high-treaſon, produced the civil war; that grey-coated man or the green-man ſent on board a tender, or detained in priſon without trial, he, too, will have his political conſequence. Senſible acts of violence have an epidemic force—they operate by ſympathy—they poſſeſs the air as it were by certain tender influences, and ſpread the kindred paſſion thro' the whole of the community.—No wonder the difficulties have encreaſed on the Government! Sad experiment! to blood the magiſtracy with the poor man's liberty, and employ the rich, like a pack of Government blood-hounds, to hunt down the poor.—Acts of violence like theſe, put an end to all law as well as liberty, or the affectation and appearance of either.—In the courſe

of

of the ſeſſion we aſked to what end all this? and accompanied our queſtion by ſtating the enfeebled reſources of the country—we had mentioned at the beginning, that the debt of the war had been about 5,000,000l. we were told it was an error—I wiſh it had been ſo—but, on examination, that ſum appeared ſomewhat about the debt of the war. And it will appear, if the preſent loans are filled, that the debt of the war will be near 8,000,000l. We ſubmitted the effects of the war on the reſources of the country, and here again it was ſaid we were in error; I wiſh we had been ſo; but at what intereſt does the State borrow money—an intereſt which between man and man would be uſury, and nearly double the former rate. We mentioned the ſtate of the revenue to have declined: again were we contradicted; but what is the fact? what buſineſs is now done on the quay?—We did not wiſh to reveal the *arcana imperii*, we ſtated nothing more than appeared from the terms propoſed in the Gazette, from the returns of your Cuſtom-houſe, and the printed reſolutions touching the ſtate of your manufactures; and we ſtated thoſe public facts, not to damp the public confidence in the defence of the country, but to abate a little of that frantic confidence manifeſted in a determination, at the hazard of her ſafety, to go on with a ſyſtem of domeſtic coercion, till the Miniſter ſhould conquer the People—and of foreign war, till the ſame Miniſter ſhould atchieve another conqueſt at the riſque of general ruin—till he ſhould, ſword in hand,

hand, recover Brabant; that Miniſter has found it a more preſſing experiment to defend Cork than to take Flanders, as the Emperor has found it a ſafer experiment to abandon Flanders and Italy to ſave Vienna. We mentioned thoſe our objections to ſuch folly then, and I repeat them now, not to damp your zeal againſt a foreign enemy, but to confine the zeal of Government to one enemy, and to deprecate a ſecond enemy—our own people and a civil war added to a foreign one.—Such was the ſyſtem of coercion. To oppoſe a remedy is eaſy; to propoſe one is difficult and anxious; it appeared to us that we ſhould fail in duty and in candour, if, when we reſiſted the project of Government, we did not ſubmit a plan of our own, and the only plan that appeared to us to promiſe peace or proſperity, was——conciliation;——we propoſed, accordingly the Emancipation of the Catholics and a Reform in the Commons Houſe of Parliament. To the firſt it was objected, that ſuch a meaſure was irreconcilable with the ſafety of the King or the connection with England. To the firſt objection we anſwered, that the capacities of three-fourths of the people ſhould not be made a perſonal compliment to his Majeſty, and that the pretence for taking away thoſe capacities ſhould not be the religion of his Majeſty's allies, of his preſent ſubjects of Canada, of his late ſubjects of Corſica, or a conſiderable part of his fleet, and of a great part of his army—that the principles that placed his family on the Throne were thoſe of Liberty—And that his Iriſh

ſubjects,

ſubjects, if not convicted of felony, were entitled to the benefit of thoſe principles, and that the Catholics have in juſtice and reaſon at leaſt as good a right to Liberty as his Majeſty has to the Crown. We obſerved, that the only impediment to the Catholic claim, as the law now ſtands, was the oath requiring the abduration of the worſhip of the Virgin Mary, and of the doctrine of the real preſence; that to make theſe points, at ſuch a time as this, matter of alarm to the ſafety of the King, was to give an air of ridicule to the ſerious calamities in which thoſe, his Miniſters, had involved him. That ſuch opinions, now abſtracted from foreign politics, it was beyond the right or the power of the State to ſettle or puniſh—that Kings had no right to enter into the tabernacle of the human mind, and hang up there the images of their own orthodoxy; that the Catholics did not inſiſt his Majeſty ſhould be of their religion, that his Majeſty had no right to exact that the Catholics ſhould be of his—that we knew of no royal rule either for religion or mathematics; and indeed the diſtance between divine and human nature being infinitely the proportion in that reference between the King and the Subject is loſt, and therefore in matters of religion they both are equally dark and ſhould be equally humble; and when Courts or Kings aſſume a dictation on that ſubject, they aſſume a familiarity with the Almighty, which, is exceſs of blaſphemy as well as of blindneſs. Our contemplation, the moſt profound, on Divine Nature, can only lead us to one grea

conclusion,

concluſion, our own immeaſurable inanity; from whence we ſhould learn, that we can never ſerve God but in ſerving his creature, and to think we ſerve God by a profuſion of prayer, when we degrade and proſcribe his creature and our fellow-creature, was to ſuppoſe Heaven, like the Court of Princes, a region of flattery, and that man can there procure a holy connivance at his inhumanity, on the perſonal application of luxurious and complimentary devotion. Or, if the argument were to deſcend from religious to moral ſtudy, ſurely, ſurely Miniſters ſhould have remembered that the Catholics had contributed greatly to the expences of the war, and had bled profuſely therein; that they themſelves were much in debt to human nature, and ſhould not loſe that one opportunity of paying a very ſmall part of it, merely by a reſtoration of loyal ſubjects to their own inheritance, their Liberty. We ſuggeſted ſuch a ſtep as a meaſure of policy as well as juſtice, with a view to the ſtrength and power of his Majeſty, who was moſt improperly made a bar to ſuch a conceſſion. We ſuggeſted that his ſituation with regard to America—to Europe—to his allies and enemies, was critical; and that it was a mockery of that ſituation to ſuppoſe that the worſhip of the Virgin Mary, or the doctrine of real preſenee, conſtituted any part of the Royal difficulties; that there was no ſpectre to diſturb the Royal imagination, but an exiſting ſubſtance—a gigantic form walked the earth at this moment, who ſmote Crowns with a hundred hands,

and

and opened for the ſeduction of their ſubjects a hundred arms—Democracy ; and we implored Miniſters againſt ſuch an enemy to ally and identify the King with all his people, without diſtinction of religion, and not to detach him from any part of them to make a miſerable alliance with Prieſtcraft, which was a falling cauſe, and a ſuperannuated folly. With regard to the danger offered to the connexion with England from the emancipation of the Catholics, we obſerved, that the argument was of a moſt dangerous and inſulting nature, for it amounted to a declaration that the privileges of a vaſt portion of a nation ſhould be ſacrificed to another country ; that it was not the old internal queſtion, whether the privileges of one part of Ireland ſhould be ſacrificed to the ambition of the other, but whether a vaſt deſcription of the people of Ireland ſhould be ſacrificed to England ; we obſerved, that in this part of the argument we need not recur to juſtice, we might rely on policy ; and we aſked was it the policy of England for the purity of Iriſh faith to make experiments on Iriſh allegiance ? we did not wiſh to exaggerate—but were juſtified in making this ſuppoſition—ſuppoſe Ireland the ſeat of Government, and that for the better ſecuring the ſafety of the King, here reſident, and for the connexion of Great Britain with Ireland, that the Iriſh ſhould incapacitate all the Proteſtants of England ? the ſame affection which England, on that ſuppoſition would afford to the Iriſh, the ſame affection has ſhe now a right to expect from Ireland. When Eng-

land had conquered France, poſſeſſed America, guided the councils of Pruſſia, directed Holland, and intimidated Spain; when ſhe was the great weſtern oracle to which the nations of the earth repaired, from whence to draw eternal truths of policy and freedom—when her root extended from continent to continent, and the dew of the two hemiſpheres watered her branches—then, indeed, we allowed with leſs danger, but never with juſtice, ſhe might have made ſacrifices of the claims of the Iriſh. I do not mean, we did not mean, to preſs a ſenſe of the change which has taken place in the power of England, further than to prevent further changes more mortifying and deciſive, and to impreſs on Great Britain this important conviction, that as Ireland is neceſſary to her, ſo is complete and perfect liberty neceſſary to Ireland, and that both iſlands muſt be drawn much cloſer to a free Conſtitution, that they may be drawn cloſer to one another. The ſecond part of our plan of conciliation was the Reform of Parliament. The object of the plan was, to reſtore the Houſe of Commons to the people. If the plan do not accompliſh that, it is not the idea of the framers; but no plan could ſatisfy thoſe perſons who wiſhed to retain the credit of Reformers and the influence of boroughs—no plan could ſatisfy thoſe who complained when any veſtige of borough influence was continued that the Parliament was not reformed, and when the veſtiges were ſwept away, that the Conſtitution was demoliſhed—no plan could ſatisfy thoſe who deſired

that the boroughs ſhould be deſtroyed and preſerved and were willing to let the people ſit in the Houſe of Commons provided the Ariſtocracy ſat in their lap. It is in favour of the plan ſubmitted, that, without any communication whatever with the other ſide of the water, it bears a ſtrong and cloſe reſemblance to the plan propoſed in the Parliament of Great Britain, and in that reſemblance carries with it a preſumption that it has a foundation in common ſenſe and common intereſt; the objections to it, founded on the preſumed antiquity of the borough ſyſtem, hardly ventured to make their appearance; examination into the ſubject had ſhewn that the greater part of the Iriſh boroughs were creations by the houſe of Stuart for the avowed purpoſe of modelling and ſubverting the Parliamentary Conſtitution of Ireland; that theſe were underſtated when called abuſes in the Conſtitution, that they were groſs and monſtrous violations, recent and wicked innovations, and the fatal uſurpations on the Conſtitution by Kings whoſe family loſt the Throne for crimes leſs deadly to freedom, and who in their Star Chamber tyranny—in their Court of High Commiſſion—in their Ship-money, or in their diſpenſing power, did not commit an act ſo diabolical in intention, ſo mortal in principle, or ſo radically ſubverſive of the fundamental rights of the realm, as the fabrication of boroughs, which is the fabrication of a court Parliament, and the excluſion of a Conſtitutional Commons, and which is a ſubverſion, not of the fundamental laws, but of

the Conſtitutional Lawgiver; you baniſh that family for the other acts, and you retain that act by which they have baniſhed the Commons.

It was objected with more ſucceſs that the Conſtitution of Boroughs, however in theory defective, has worked well in fact; but it appeared to us that this was an hiſtoric error—we ſtated in anſwer to that objection, that the birth of the borough inundation, was the deſtruction of liberty and property, that James I. the king who made that inundation, by that means deſtroyed the titles of his Iriſh ſubjects to their lands, without the leaſt ceremony—the robbery of his liberty was immediately followed by the robbery of his property; for rely on it, the King that takes liberty will very ſoon take away property—he will rob the ſubject of his liberty by influence, and then he may plunder him of his property by ſtatute. There were at that time, the hiſtorian adds, inferior grievances; what were they? martial law and extortion by the ſoldiers, in levying the King's duties—a criminal juriſdiction exerciſed by the Caſtle chamber, and a judicial power by the Council. Theſe inferior and thoſe ſuperior grievances, amounted to no law at all. How could it happen, ſays the Hiſtorian, that the King could do all this with ſo ſmall an army, ſeize the properties of the ſubjects, and tranſport the inhabitant. I will preſume to conjecture;—the King had another inſtrument, more ſubtle and more pliable than the ſword—and againſt the liberty of the ſubject, more cold and deadly, a Court inſtrument, that murders freedom

dom without the mark of blood—palls itſelf in the covering of the conſtitution, and in her own colours, and in her name plants the dagger, a borough Parliament: Under this borough ſyſtem, the reign of James was bad, but the next was worſe; the grievances which England complained of, under Charles the 1ſt, were committed in Ireland alſo.—Thoſe meaſures I mean called the new Councils—they had been aggravated here by an attempt to confiſcate the province of Connaught: there is extant a correſpondence on the ſubject of Ireland, between the King and his Deputy, Lord Strafford, of a moſt criminal and diſguſting nature; his Majeſty begins by profeſſing his general horrors of the Conſtitution—he proceeds to acknowledge his particular injuries to the Iriſh, he owned that he had defrauded the Iriſh of their promiſed graces, and he expreſſes his fears that they have a right in juſtice to aſk what it was his intereſt, as it appeared to be his determination, to refuſe. His Deputy—what does he do? he exceeds his royal maſter in his zeal againſt the pretenſions of Ireland. A judicious Court ſycophant will often flatter the Court of St. James, by Iriſh ſacrifice, whether it is the Conſtitution, or the fair name of the country. He, the Deputy, had, ſaid the hiſtorian, two great objects—one was to fleece the people of Ireland and the other was to cheat them—to get the money, and to elude the graces. He ſucceeded—why? becauſe there was another—a third inſtrument, worſe than himſelf—a borough Parliament—that borough Parliament

met

met—it voted ſix ſubſidies, and redreſſed nothing —this is virtue and public ſpirit, in compariſon to what it did after—after committing theſe crimes for which the Deputy juſtly loſt his head, after having ſeized part of the province of Connaught—after the inflicting martial law—monopolies—raiſing an army againſt law—and money to pay that army againſt law—after fining and confining againſt law—the borough Parliament vote that Deputy an extraordinary ſupply, and in the preamble of the act they paſs on that Deputy an extraordinary panegyric, with ſuch a thorough conviction of his iniquity and their own—that they impeach after that very Miniſter for thoſe very acts, and record a proteſtation againſt the record of their panegyric, to give way to the meanneſs of another borough Parliament, who, on the return of his family, cancels the record of the proteſtation to reſtore the force of the panegyric ;—maſſacre—confuſion—civil war —religious fury followed naturally and of courſe—here you ſee hatched and matured the egg that produced the maſſacre, and all that brood of mortal conſequences.

The principles of right were rooted out of the land by Government, and they were amazed at anarchy—the barriers againſt inundation were removed by the Government, and they were aſtoniſhed to be overwhelmed by a popular torrent ; the principles of robbery were planted by the Deputy, and the Government were ſurpriſed at the growth of popular pillage—had the country been left to a ſtate

of

of a barbarous nature ſhe could not have been ſo ſhattered and convulſed as when thus reduced to a ſtate of barbarous art, where the Government had vitiated that Parliamentary Conſtitution; it profeſſed to introduce, and had introduced without profeſſing it, influence not civilization, had ſet one order of the nation in feud againſt the other—had tainted the gentry with the itch of venality, (there was bribery in thoſe days as well as violence,) and had given them ideas of vice but not days of refinement. I paſs over a hundred and thirty years, a horrid vacuum in your hiſtory of borough Parliaments—ſave only as it has been filled with four horrid images in the four-fold proſcription of the religion, trade, of the judicative, and legiſlative authority of the country, by the commercial reſtrictions of William, the penal laws of William and Anne, and the declaratory act of the 6th of George. And I come to the boundary of the gulph where the Conſtitution begins to ſtir and live in an octennial bill, accompanied, however, with and corrected by a court project of new parliamentary influence and degradation. This project may be called a court plan for reforming borough Parliaments, but reforming them not on the principle of popular repreſentation, but of a more complete and perfect excluſion and baniſhment of the Commons—the people had begun to form certain combinations with the oligarchy, and like weeds began to grow a little about the doors and courts of their own Houſes of Parliament, and like weeds it was thought

thought proper to baniſh them—and as Govern-ment had before reſorted to the creation of boroughs to overwhelm the Commons, ſo now they reſorted to a new hoſt of places and penſions to overwhelm the oligarchy. This is the famous half million, or the experiment of the Caſtle, to ſecure the dependance of Parliament, and to prevent the formation of an Iriſh party againſt the domination of a Britiſh Cabinet. The Court could not then, like the 1ſt James and the 1ſt Charles, command to riſe up a new fabric of boroughs like a regal Pandemonium, to conſtitute a regal Houſe of Commons; it therefore engendered a young and numerous family of places and penſions to bribe and to buy, and to ſplit and ſhatter, and to corrupt the oligarchy. Thus were the people once more excluded from the chance of influence in Parliament, and as it were ſhouldered from the threſhold of their own houſe by a hoſt of placemen and penſioners, who had left the cauſe of the country to follow the fortunes of the ariſtocracy, and now left the ariſtocracy to follow the fortunes of the Court, and then voted new loans and new taxes to furniſh wages for the double apoſtacy. You had now but little to give up, and that little you ſurrendered; you gave your proviſion trade by an embargo of 76 to the contractors, and you ſurrendered by new loans and taxes, your revenues to the Miniſter. You accompanied theſe ſacrifices with the unvarying felicitations of borough Parliaments, on the virtues of government, on the great and growing

proſperity of your country, and her commerce, which bring the poor progreſs of the country, your borough hiſtory and that of your Chief Governors, a continuation of rapine, they have been wittily called, to the cataſtrophe of 79, which found your State a bankrupt, and your community a beggar, and which induced Parliament to declare that ſuch has been the workings of your borough ſyſtem, and ſuch the ſenſe of that Parliament reſpecting it, that nothing but a free trade could ſave the country from impending ruin. I wiſh to ſpeak with all honour of the Parliament at that moment, but muſt recollect the circumſtances of that moment. Why did Parliament expreſs itſelf in that manner at that time, and demand its rights a ſhort time after? becauſe Parliament was at thoſe moments in contact with the people, and it is the object of the Reform that ſhe ſhould continue in contact with the people always, and with the Miniſter never, except the people ſhould be in contact with him; that Parliament declared that nothing could ſave this country from impending ruin, except a free trade—but in declaring that it declared much more; it proteſted againſt theſe borough Parliaments of a century, who had acquieſced in the loſs of a free trade; who had ſuffered the country to be reduced to that ſtate of impending ruin, for want of that free trade—and who had beheld the approaches of that ruin with a profuſion of thanks, and a regular felicitation on the growing proſperity and flouriſhing commerce of a ruined country—

and that Parliament did, by neceſſary inference, declare, to ſave the country from returning to that ſtate of ruin—and it was abſolutely neceſſary to reform the ſtate and model of thoſe Borough Parliaments—and therefore is an authority for a popular repreſentation, as well as for a free trade—indeed it not only proclaimed the neceſſity, but conſtituted it; for in a ſhort time after it gave this country a new political ſituation, wherein ſhe ceaſed to be a province, and became a nation, and of courſe it rendered thoſe borough Parliaments that were adequate to the management of a province, abſurd and inapplicable when that province became a nation. A province muſt be governed with a view to the intereſt of another country—a nation with a view to her own intereſt—a borough Parliament was therefore not only competent to govern a province, but the only kind of Parliament fit for the degradation of ſuch a ſervice, and for that very reaſon it was the moſt unfit and inadmiſſible inſtrument in the government of a nation—for the principle of its birth, being, in that caſe, oppoſite to the principle of its duty—the principle of its birth being court intrigue, with touched and tainted contractors, and the principle of its duty being the defence of the nation againſt ſuch intrigue and ſuch contractor—the nature of Parliament being oppoſed to its duty, or its duty to its parent, being in contradiction with its duty to its country—it follows that the nation in ſuch a caſe muſt be reprovincialized, and the independency ſuppoſed to have been then

obtained

obtained, at that period would have been only a transfer of dependancy from the Parliament of Great-Britain to the Court of St. James's, in covin and in couple with the borough-brokers of Ireland; therefore the independency of your Parliament, and the full and free representation of your people are terms synonimous and commensurate. In opposition to this history, and these arguments submitted in different shapes to the House, in support of Parliamentary Reform, it was replied, that the borough constitution had worked well at least since 1782—for before no man will contend for it, and that the country had greatly advanced in commerce and in tillage; and indeed as far as the ploughman and the weaver are concerned, too much cannot be said to justify against every charge of sloth, the character of the Irishman, and to vindicate against a vulgar error, the native energy of a strong, hardy, bold, brave, laborious, warm-hearted, and FAITHFUL RACE of MEN.—But as far as that boast goes to political measures, we cannot so well express our detestation of them as by recital; the propositions—the new taxes without the trade—the new debt, notwithstanding the new taxes—the sale of the Peerage—the surrender of the East India trade for the re-export trade—the refusal of the re-export trade, without such barter—the inequality of the channel trade, and the present provincial tariff suffered still to obtain between the two countries—8,000,000l. of loan voted on account of the war, without commercial compensation, liberality, or equality—the encrease

of offices, for the profeſſed purpoſes of procuring a majority—another encreaſe of offices ſince the place bill—the bar bill—the convention bill—the gunpowder bill—the indemnity bill—the ſecond indemnity bill—the inſurrection bill—the ſuſpenſion of the habeas corpus—General Lake's proclamation by order of Government—the approbation afforded to that proclamation—the ſubſequent proclamation of Government, more military and deciſive—the order to the military to act without waiting for the civil power—the impriſonment of the middle orders without law—the detaining them in priſon without bringing them to trial—the tranſporting them without law—burning their houſes; burning their villages—murdering them; crimes, many of which are public, and many committed which are concealed by the ſuppreſſion of a free preſs, by military force—the preventing the legal meetings of counties to petition his Majeſty, by orders acknowledged to be given to the military to diſperſe them; ſubverting the ſubjects' right to petition—and finally, the introduction of practices not only unknown to law, but unknown to civilized and chriſtian countries.—— Such has been the working of the borough ſyſtem; nor could ſuch meaſures have taken place but for that ſyſtem. Such practices, however, have in part been defended as acts of power, neceſſary to prevent inſurrection, and puniſh conſpiracy. But it appeared to us, that in theſe practices Government was combating effects, not cauſes; and that thoſe practices encreaſe theſe cauſes, and therefore will encreaſe

creaſe thoſe effects ; that admitting every charge of conſpiracy and diſaffection in its fulleſt extent—that conſpiracy and diſaffection are only effects of that great fundamental cauſe ;—that parent conſpiracy formed ſome years ago, to procure by corruption deſpotic power. That is the cauſe, and that cauſe acts according to the reception of its matter, and the tempers and conſtitutions to which it applies ; and therefore produces on ſome men diſloyalty, in ſome republicaniſm, in ſome the ſpirit of reform ; but in all, deep, great, and growing diſcontent. That is the cauſe and the poiſon which has made ſome men mad, and all men ſick: and tho' the Government may not be able to reſtore reaſon to the mad, or loyalty to the republican, yet if they mean to reſtore health to the ſick, if they mean to reſtore content and confidence to all, to moſt, or to any conſiderable portion of the people, they muſt take away the poiſon, they muſt remove the cauſe ; they muſt reform the Parliament. They have told us at ſome times, and at other times they have ſaid the contrary, that it is a ſpirit of plunder, not politics, that is abroad: idle talk—whatever be the crime of the preſent ſpirit, it is not the crime of theft—if ſo, it were eaſily put down ; no, it is a political, not a predatory ſpirit ; it is the ſpirit of political reformation, carried to different degrees—to liberty, in ſome inſtances—to ambition, in others—and to power, in others. And even in theſe caſes where charged to be carried to confiſcation, it is evident from the charge itſelf that confiſcation looks

to

to political vengeance, not private plunder; and therefore the beſt way of laying that ſpirit, of whatever deſigns or intents, is to lay the pre-exiſting ſpirit of unlawful power and unconſtitutional influence, that has frighted the people from Parliament, and has called to our world that other potent and uncircumſcribed apparition. The way to defend your property, is to defend your liberty; and the beſt method to ſecure your houſe againſt a Defender is to ſecure the Commons' Houſe againſt a Miniſter. "There was ambition, there was ſedition, "there was violence, mixing in the public cauſe," ſaid Lord Chatham to Mr. Flood, in a private converſation, as he told me, on the civil war between Charles I. and his People. "There was," ſaid he, "ambition—there was ſedition—there was vio-"lence—but no man will perſuade me that it was "not the cauſe of liberty on one ſide, and tyranny "on the other."——So here there may be conſpiracy—there may be republicaniſm, there may be a ſpirit of plunder mixing in the public cauſe;—but it is a public cauſe, and let no man perſuade you that it is not the cauſe of liberty on one ſide, and tyranny on the other.—The hiſtorian of theſe melancholy and alarming times, cenſuring perhaps both the Miniſter and the Oppoſition, and cenſuring us more for our relaxation than violence, will, if a candid man, cloſe the ſad account by obſerving, "that on "the whole, the cauſe of the Iriſh diſtraction of 97 "was the conduct of the ſervants of Government "endeavouring to eſtabliſh by unlimited bribery

"abſolute

" abſolute power—that the ſyſtem of coercion was " a neceſſary conſequence, and part of the ſyſtem of " corruption, and that the two ſyſtems in their ſuc- " ceſs would have eſtabliſhed a ruthleſs and horrid " tyranny—tremendous, and intolerable—impoſed " on the Senate by influence, and the people by " arms."—Againſt ſuch exceſs of degradation—againſt any exceſs whatſoever, we moved the middle and as we thought the compoſing and the ſalutary meaſure—a Reform of Parliament, which ſhould give a Conſtitution to the People—and the Catholic Emancipation, which ſhould give a People to the Conſtitution. We ſupported that meaſure by the argument herein advanced, and we defended ourſelf by ſuch, againſt a deluge of abuſe conveyed in the public prints againſt us on account of that meaſure—and I re-ſtate thoſe arguments, that however the majority of the Houſe of Commons might have been affected, your underſtanding may not be carried away by ſuch a torrent of invective. We urged theſe conſiderations—we might have added in our defence the dangers of invaſion, and inſurrection, panics moſt likely to incline the Miniſter to concur in ſuch a meaſure, which meaſure ſeems to be our beſt, I might ſay our only defence againſt thoſe dangers and thoſe panics, we might have added conſiderations of the immenſe expence attendant on the working, as it is called, of this Borough Conſtitution: which expence may be called the prodigality of miſrepreſentation, or the huge and gigantic profuſion which the people ſupply for turn-

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ing themſelves out of Parliament. It is well known that the price of boroughs is from 14 to 16,000l. and has in the courſe of not many years increaſed one-third; a proof at once of the extravagance and audacity of this abuſe, which thus looks to immortality, and proceeds, unawed by the times and uninſtructed by example; and, in moments which are held alarming, entertains no fear, conceives no panic, and feels no remorſe which prevents the chapman and dealer to go on at any riſque with his villainous little barter, in the very rockings and frownings of the elements, and makes him tremble indeed at liberty, but not at crimes. "Suſpend the "habeas corpus act—take away the poor man—"ſend the reformer to newgate—impriſon the "north; but for the trade of Parliament—for the "borough-broker of that trade, don't affect him; "give him a gunpowder act, give him a convention "bill, give him an inſurrection bill, give him an "indemnity bill, and, having ſaturated him with "the liberty of his country, give him all the plun-"der of the State." Such is the practical language of that great Noun of Multitude—the borough-broker, demurring on the troubles of the times, which he himſelf has principally cauſed, and lying at the door of a ſecretary full of ſores and exactions. This ſum I ſpeak of, this 14 or 16,000l. muſt ultimately be paid by you; it is this increaſe of the price of boroughs which has produced the increaſe of the expence of your eſtabliſhments, and this increaſe of the expence of your eſtabliſhment, which has produced

duced this increaſe for the price of your boroughs; they operate alternately like cauſe and effect, and have within themſelves the double principle of rapid ruin——ſo that the people pay their members as formerly, but pay them more, and pay them for repreſenting others, not themſelves, and giving the public purſe, full and open, to the Miniſter, and rendering it back empty to the people. Oh, unthrifty people! who ever ſurrendered that invaluable right of paying your own repreſentatives—rely on it, the people muſt be the prey if they are not the paymaſters. To this public expence we are to add the monſtrous and bankrupt waſte of private property, becoming now ſo great, that honeſt men, can't, in any number, afford to come into Parliament:—the expence amounts to a child's portion, and the child muſt be wronged, or the father ſold or excluded. Thus, in the borough conſtitution, is private virtue and public ſet at variance, and men muſt renounce the ſervice of their country or the intereſt of their family; from this evil, the loſs of private fortune, a much greater loſs is likely hereafter to take place, the loſs of talent in the public ſervice; for this great expence muſt in the end work out of Parliament all unſtipendiary talent that acts for the people, and ſupply it by ſtipendiary talent that acts againſt them. What man of ſmall fortune, what man of great fortune can now afford to come into the Houſe of Commons or ſuſtain the expence of a ſeat in Parliament, or of a conteſted election? and what open place,

except in a very few inſtances, (the city is one of them) where the electors return without coſt to their repreſentatives? I know ſome who have great talents and have exerciſed them in the public ſervice, are diſpoſed to decline ſituations, to the honeſt individual ſo expenſive, and to the public now ſo unprofitable. To this I am to add a greater evil than thoſe already ſtated, the expenditure of morals. What ſhall we ſay for the morals of a country—how many years purchaſe would you give for her virtue, whoſe Miniſtry founded its authority on moral depravity, and formed a league and covenant with an oligarchy to transfer for hire, virtually and ſubſtantially, the powers of legiſlation to the Cabinet of another kingdom? We inveigh againſt other combinations—what ſort of a combination is this? This, I know not by what name to approach it, ſhoots its virus into the heart and marrow of the higher orders of the country. Make your People honeſt, ſays the Court—make your Court honeſt ſay the People;—it is the higher claſſes that introduce corruption—thieving may be learned from poverty—but corruption is learned from riches—it is a venal court that makes a venal country—that vice deſcends from above; the peaſant does not go to the caſtle for the bribe, but the caſtle candidate goes to the peaſant—and the caſtle candidate offers the bribe to the peaſant, becauſe he expects in a much greater bribe to be repaid by the Miniſter; thus things go on; 'tis impoſſible they can laſt:—the trade of Parliament ruins every thing

thing; your Miniſters reſted their authority entirely on that trade, till now they call in the aid of military power to enforce corruption by the ſword —the laws did, in my judgment, afford the Crown ſufficient power to adminiſter the country, and preſerve the connexion with Great Britain, but our Miniſters have deſpiſed the ordinary tract, and plain, obvious, legitimate and vulgar bonds between the King and the ſubject; they have reſorted to the guinea and the gallows, as to the only true and faithful friends of Government, and try to hang where they can't corrupt; they have extended the venal ſtipendiary principle to all conſtituted authorities; they have given the taint to the grave Corporator as well as the Senator, and have gone into the halls and ſtreet to communicate the evil to the middling and orderly part of the ſociety; they have attempted the independency of the bar. I have great objections to the bar-bill—and my objections are great in proportion to my regards for the profeſſion, whoſe ſignal ſervices to the cauſe of liberty muſt prove to every man's conviction how valuable the acquiſition, and how ineſtimable the loſs of that profound and acute profeſſion muſt be to the cauſe of a country ſuch as this was formerly, where the rule of Government was the law of the land. We have heard of complaints againſt ſyſtems of diſorganization; what is this ſyſtem? Is not the corruption of organized bodies their diſſolution? Is not their perverſion worſe than their diſſolution? What ſhall we ſay of the attempts of

Miniſters on Sheriffs, and the appointment of that magiſtrate with a view to Parliamentary influence only—and to the prevention of legal aggregate meetings—and the ſuppreſſion of the public ſentiment.——Theſe things muſt have an end—this diſorganization of conſtituted authorities by court influence muſt have an end. I am not ſuperſtitious—but I know that ſtates, like individuals, are puniſhed; it is to prevent their puniſhment we aſſayed their reformation; they are puniſhed collectively, and they are puniſhed ſlowly, but they are puniſhed: where the people are generally or univerſally corrupt, the ſociety comes to a ſtate of diſſolution; where that corruption is confined to thoſe who adminiſter the country, that power muſt come to a ſtate of diſſolution; but in order to prevent the ſociety from partaking of that corruption and conſequence of that corrupt diſſolution, it is neceſſary that the power that adminiſters the country ſhould be brought ſpeedily and radically to a ſtate of reformation; the beſt ſyſtems are not immortal; are the worſt? Is the trade of Parliament immortal? Have the beſt ſyſtems periſhed?—and ſhall this be impaſſible and everlaſting, infinite in its duration, as it is unbounded in its profligacy.—What was the caſe of Carthage—of Rome—and of the court of France? What is the caſe of the court of England? Sitting under the ſtroke of Juſtice for the American war—paying pains and penalties in augmented burdens and diminiſhed glory; that influence which has depreſſed her liberty has deſtroyed

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her energy, and rendered her as unfit to preſerve her empire as her freedom. As long as the battle was between the Court and the Conſtitution, the former was perfectly equal to ſubdue her own people; but when ſhe was to combat another people, ſhe was unequal to the taſk, and for the very reaſon, becauſe ſhe had ſeduced and debaſed her own.—The corruption of the Court has rendered England vincible, and has endued her in her preſent ſtate of national degradation with an inſenſibility of glory —the reſult and evidence of mental degeneracy. I remember to have heard Lord Chatham in one of his ſpeeches on the Middleſex election obſerve, that in his Miniſtry the object of the Court of England was the conqueſt of the French, and that now it was the conqueſt of Mr. Wilkes. The purſuing ſuch like conqueſts as thoſe over Mr. Wilkes, has enabled the French to eſtabliſh a conqueſt over the Engliſh. The king who is adviſed to conquer the liberty of his ſubjects, prepares thoſe ſubjects for a foreign yoke. The Romans were conquered at Cannæ, firſt by Varro, and afterwards by Hannibal. The Engliſh have been conquered firſt by the Miniſter, and afterwards by the French. Thoſe Romans were finally conquered by the barbarians of the North, becauſe they had been previouſly conquered by the Princes of the Empire—and then the half-armed ſavage with the pike and the pole came down on the frontiers and diſpoſed of the maſters of the world as of the ſtock of the land—the gouty ſtock of the rich, and the mute ſtock of the people.

It is now ſixty years ſince the adoption of the project to ſupply in corruption what the Chief Magiſtrate loſt in prerogative—the loſs of thirteen provinces, of 120,000,000l.—to loſe theſe provinces, the loſs of our ſtation in Europe, the loſs of 130 millions, to loſe that ſtation—to place the Crown of England as low in Europe as in America—and to put France at the head of Europe, inſtead of Great Britain, while her people crouch under a load of debt and taxes, without an empire to conſole, or a conſtitution to cover them, has been the working of that project—it has worked ſo well as to have worked the people out of their liberty, and his Majeſty out of his empire; to leave him as little authority in Europe, as his people in Parliament; and to put the King at the feet of France, as the people are put at the feet of the King; public credit has alſo fallen a victim to this its ſucceſs, its laſt great conqueſt after liberty and empire. In this rapid decline no one Miniſter has been puniſhed or even queſtioned; and an empire and a conſtitution have been loſt without one penal example; and in a war unparalleled in expence and diſgrace, and attended with the groſſeſt and rankeſt errors, cloſing the account of blood with proclamations of inſolvency—no murmur from the Parliament of either countries—no murmur! Far from enquiry or complaint, confidence has uniformly attended defeat and diſhonour. The Miniſter's majorities are become as numerous as his diſgraces; and ſo gigantic have been his encroachments on the independency of the Conſtitution,

Conſtitution, that they can only be matched by the gigantic encroachment of the enemy on the empire. In ſhort, ſo perfectly do the people appear to be driven out of all footing in the Conſtitution, that when his Majeſty is driven out of almoſt all footing in Europe, and a queſtion is made by the people, whether the Miniſters of theſe diſgraces and diſhonours ſhall be diſmiſſed? they have their majority at hand to ſupport them.—Againſt this inundation of evil we interpoſed Reform; we were convinced of its neceſſity from the conſideration of corruption at home; we were confirmed in that conviction from the conſideration of revolutions abroad. We ſaw the regal power of France deſtroyed by debts, by expence, and by abuſes; we ſaw the Nobility interpoſe for thoſe abuſes only, to encumber the Throne with their ruins, and to add revolution of property to revolution of government; we ſaw in the American revolution, that a people determined to be free cannot be enſlaved; that Britiſh Government was not equal to the taſk, even in plenitude of empire, ſupported by the different governments of the provinces, and by the ſad apoſtacy of the hapleſs loyaliſt; that loyaliſt is a leſſon to the rich and great to ſtand by their country in all ſituations —and that in a conteſt with a remote Court, the firſt poſt of ſafety is to ſtand by the country, and the ſecond poſt of ſafety is to ſtand by the country, and the third poſt of ſafety is to ſtand by the country—In that American conteſt we ſaw that Reform which had been born in England

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and baniſhed to America, advanced like the Shepherd Lad in Holy Writ, and overthrow Goliah. He returned riding on the wave of the Atlantic, and his ſpirit moved on the waters of Europe.—The royal ſhip of France went down—the Britiſh man of war labours—your veſſel is affected—throw your people overboard, ſay your Miniſters, and ballaſt with your abuſes—throw your abuſes over-board, we ſaid, and ballaſt with your people. We recollected theſe iſlands were formerly placed in a ſea of deſpotiſm—we ſaw they were now two kingdoms in a republican ocean, ſituated between two great revolutions, with a certainty of being influenced more or leſs by one or by both. We aſked ourſelves was it poſſible that the American revolution could have had ſuch effects on France, and that the American and the French revolutions would have no effect on theſe countries. The queſtions that affect the world, are decided on the theatre of the world. The great queſtion of popular liberty was fought on the great rivers of Europe and America—it remained to moderate what we could not govern—and what method ſo ſafe to moderate popular power, as by limited Monarchy? and what method remains to limit the Monarchy of theſe kingdoms (it has now no limits) but by reforming Parliament? What method, I ſay, to prevent a Revolution but a Reformation?—and what is that Reformation of Parliament, but the reſtoration to the people of Self-legiſlation, without which there is no liberty, as without Reform no Self-legiſlation?—So we reaſoned. The Govern-

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ment of a country may be placed in the hands of one man, and that one man may reſide in another kingdom, and yet the people may be free and ſatisfied; but to have the Legiſlature of the country, or what is the ſame thing, the influencing and directing ſpirit of the Legiſlature placed out of the country, to have not only the King but the Legiſlature an abſentee—to have not only the head but the heart diſpoſed of in another country—ſuch a condition may be a diſguiſed, but it is unqualified and perfect deſpotiſm. Self-legiſlation is life, and has been fought for, as for being. It was that principle that called forth reſiſtance to the Houſe of Stuart, and baptized with Royalty the Houſe of Hanover, when the people ſtood ſponſors for their allegiance to the liberty of the ſubjects; for Kings are but ſatellites, and your freedom is the luminary that has called them to the ſkies. It was with a view, therefore, to reſtore Liberty, and with a view alſo to ſecure and immortalize Royalty, by reſtoring to the people ſelf-legiſlation—we propoſed Reform; a principle of attraction about which the King and people would ſpin on quietly and inſenſibly in regular movements, and in a ſyſtem common to them both. "No—no—no—the half million, ſaid the "Miniſter, that is my principle of attraction. "Among the rich, I ſend my half million, and I "diſpatch my coercion among the people." His Devil went forth—He deſtroyed Liberty and Property—He conſumed the Preſs—He burned Houſes and Villages—He murdered—and he failed. "Re-

" cal your murderer, we ſaid, and in his place diſ-
" patch our meſſenger—try conciliation—You
" have declared you wiſh the People ſhould rebel,
" to which we anſwer—God forbid!—Rather let
" them weary the royal ear with petitions, and let
" the Dove be again ſent to the King; it may bring
" back the Olive—and as to you, thou mad Miniſ-
" ter! who pour in regiment after regiment to dra-
" goon the Iriſh, becauſe you have forfeited their
" affections, we beſeech, we ſupplicate, we admo-
" niſh, reconcile the people—combat Revolution
" by Reform—let blood be your laſt experiment."
Combat the Spirit of Democracy by the Spirit of Liberty—the wild Spirit of Democratic Liberty, by the regulated Spirit of Organized Liberty, ſuch as may be found in a limited Monarchy with a free Parliament—but how accompliſh that but by reforming the preſent Parliament, whoſe narrow and contracted formation in both countries, excludes popular repreſentation—*i. e.* excludes ſelf-legiſlation—*i. e.* excludes liberty, and whoſe fatal compliances, the reſult of that defective repreſentation have cauſed, or countenanced, or ſanctioned, or ſuffered for a courſe of years, a ſucceſſion of meaſures which have collected upon us ſuch an accumulation of calamity—and which have finally at an immenſe expence, and through a ſea of blood, ſtranded theſe kingdoms on a ſolitary ſhore, naked of empire, naked of liberty, and naked of innocence, to ponder on an abyſs which has ſwallowed up one part of their fortunes, and yawns for the remainder,

" *May*

" May the Kingly power that forms one eſtate in our Conſtitution, continue for ever ; but let it be as it profeſſes to be, and as by the principles and laws of theſe countries, it ſhould be, one eſtate only—and not a power conſtituting one eſtate, creating another, and influencing a third.

" May the Parliamentary Conſtitution proſper ; but let it be an operative, independent and integral part of the Conſtitution, adviſing, confining, and ſometimes directing, the Kingly power.

" May the Houſe of Commons flouriſh ; but let the people be the ſole author of its exiſtence, as they ſhould be the great object of its care.

" May the connexion with Great Britain continue ; but let the reſult of that connexion be, the perfect freedom, in the faireſt and fulleſt ſenſe, of all deſcriptions of men, without diſtinction of religion.

" To this purpoſe we ſpoke—and ſpeaking this to no purpoſe, withdrew.—It now remains to add this ſupplication :—However it may pleaſe the Almighty to diſpoſe of Princes, or of Parliaments—MAY THE LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE BE IMMORTAL."

Henry Grattan.